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SUBJECT: WADE RE-INAUGURATED: IMAGINING SOLUTIONS TO
SENEGAL'S MAJOR PROBLEMS

REF: A. DAKAR 0450
[1](#)B. 06 DAKAR 2940
[1](#)C. 06 DAKAR 2597
[1](#)D. 06 DAKAR 2271
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Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROY L. WHITAKER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)
AND (D).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) The odd thing about President Wade's re-election is that few Senegalese are asking about his second-term plans: what they really want to know is whom he will anoint to succeed him. Meanwhile, with various opposition parties boycotting upcoming parliamentary elections, doubts about the fairness of the Wade-run election process must be resolved. Looking ahead, Senegal must synthesize the stable but stifling institutionalization that made it a democratic model, with Wade's visionary but scattershot personal ruling style. It must re-integrate war-torn Casamance while there is yet time. Finally, it must adapt to Muslim Brotherhood mindset and leadership changes, even as economic stagnation creates opportunities for political-religious mafiosi. END SUMMARY.

"URGENCES EN VEILLEUSE:" CANS GET KICKED DOWN ROAD

[1](#)2. (C) Civil society and private media point to the many flaws in the electoral system that just allowed Wade's reelection, and lament that doubts over electoral fairness constitute a "national shame" and "step backward" from democratic development. A significant portion of the opposition, devastated by its unexpected first-round defeat, is demonstrating frustration and impotence by boycotting the June 3 National Assembly vote, but, paradoxically, seems almost ready to throw itself on Wade's mercy. Socialist strategist Serigne Mbaye Thiam, for example, told us he hopes Wade will focus, after one or two years of enjoying his new mandate, on cementing his legacy as a trailblazing African democratic leader by redistributing power to other institutions.

¶3. (C) The opposition boycott will assure that Wade expands his current parliamentary supermajority, enabling him -- in theory -- to pass any constitutional amendment he chooses, including new mechanisms for naming a successor. While Wade concentrates on finishing legacy public works projects and hosting an Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit and an Islamic-Christian Dialog, the contest to succeed him will intensify, probably just below the surface. When he introduces constitutional amendments to bequeath his presidency, though, especially if he dubs son Karim, his once-loyal satraps might unite to withhold the supermajority 60 percent he needs.

¶4. (C) Though the current parliament has been an amorphous, atrophied and inconsequential mass, the next National Assembly could prove vitally important to PDS sharks. Prime Minister Macky Sall, Interior Minister Ousmane Ngom, Minister of this-and-that Aminata Tall, the brilliant non-PDS political huckster and Fisheries Minister Djibo Ka, and the for-now ostracized-from-PDS Idrissa Seck, all see Wade's second inauguration as the end of his era and the potential start of theirs. Being on Wade's candidate list for the June 3 Assembly election, along with a sizable bloc of hangers-on, means political life or death, and Wade, realizing how sensitive the list is, has kept its exact contents close to his chest since officially submitting it April 5. It was leaked that Macky Sall is on it (and Sall has hinted to the Ambassador that he expects to leave the Primature to be President of the National Assembly after June 3), but Wade presumably is now engaged in keeping his PDS from outright fratricidal war, contacting faction leaders to avert cries of pain and outrage, making sure he has dropped all open or covert Seck sympathizers, and assuaging the feelings of backbench-level loyalists who did not make the cut. In time, as he feels the need, he will dish out other patronage: new cabinet or sub-cabinet posts, presidential counselors, seats

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in the new Senate, and the unlikely but possible reshaping of the Social and Economic Council.

MEDIUM-TERM PRIORITY NUMBER ONE: EXECUTIVE SYNTHESIS

¶5. (C) Wade's record provides little reason to believe he sees the National Assembly as other than a rubber stamp, the Government as other than an instrument for implementing presidential wishes, or the Senate and Council of the Republic for Economic and Social Affairs as little other than sinecures for loyalists. His parliamentary whip, though, told us Wade wants to build stronger institutions as his legacy, and indeed, failure to enhance judicial, legislative and cabinet capacities at the expense of the presidency could constitute a wasted opportunity. Doing so will be hard, and only partly because Wade by even his admirers' admission possesses an authoritarian streak.

¶6. (C) The Senegalese presidency by design and tradition concentrates power. Founding President Senghor and his Socialists who ruled for 40 years allowed some balance and flexibility by permitting the bureaucracy to play something of the role it has long played in France: a permanent reservoir of expertise with defined responsibilities and widely accepted technical authority. Within the limiting context of the Socialists' one-party democracy, ministries and civil servants enjoyed a degree of independence and freedom of action. As long as they acted in their spheres of knowledge and coordinated initiatives with other ministries and the ruling party, ministries interpreted policy and carried out what they determined was needed.

¶7. (C) This system contributed to Senegal's stability and image as a democratic model. Norms and expectations were defined; so inter-ministerial conflicts could be avoided. Ruling party cadres became entrenched in professional niches, became good at and satisfied with what they did, and

committed to keep doing what had proved successful. There were terribly rough economic times in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but the system survived social deterioration and political challenge from Abdoulaye Wade's street rowdies. By the late 1990s, reliance on proven institutional methods and enconced inter-ministerial relationships had averted social crisis and were poised, by some accounts, to begin rebuilding the economy and public confidence.

¶8. (C) The flip side of bureaucratic reliability proved to be a penchant for choosing safety over daring, caution over bravado, status quo over change. Preference for well worn methods stymied imagination, excluded free-thinking organizational rebels, and etiolated executive intellect. There were notable exceptions, such as the last Socialist Prime Minister Mamadou Lamine Loum, but the public suspected senior government functionaries of managerial stagnation, complacency and corruption.

¶9. (C) Elected president after 24 years in opposition, and leading a party that revolved around his personal charisma, Wade's deep-seated inclination was to go around, through or over the bureaucracy. This was especially so early on when civil servants were still overwhelmingly Socialist-appointed, and while the anti-intellectual party of the dispossessed PDS as yet contained few experienced executives. The proud visionary and heavily-credentialed intellectual Wade bridled at the nitty-gritty of forcing bureaucracy to follow up on policy, nimbly tossed out ideas, but just as quickly lost interest in follow-up.

¶10. (C) Wade's executive deficiencies would have been mitigated if he had delegated real managerial and policy authority to his prime minister and cabinet. An inveterate campaigner, though, Wade saw government as a tool for holding power as well as a means of actually governing. His sacking of Prime Minister Moustapha Niasse was inspired by his then ruthless protege and campaign strategist Idrissa Seck; when Seck later proved policy-imaginative and managerially adept as prime minister Wade fired him as a political challenger. With malleable and politically club-footed Macky Sall at the Primature since 2004, Wade has consistently chosen new initiatives based on two criteria: they were legacy "grands travaux" public works project, or they helped him keep urban slum voters, support.

¶11. (C) Now that the opposition has been largely destroyed or sidelined, and with his presidency's end in sight five

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years on, Wade could strengthen institutions without fear of political challenge or disadvantage. Doing so, though, will require that he abstain from promiscuously intervening in executive decisions, appoint capable and honest people to key jobs independently of political loyalty, and allow civil servants rather than hacks on his presidential staff to monitor and recalibrate policy implementation. Wade participated for 24 years in the give-and-take of political competition within boundaries set by republican institutions, and understands the politics of compromise even if he does not often practice it. The same is not true of his minions and sword-bearers, who are loyal only to him, and recognize no limitation or sanction save his frown. If they some day inherit his personalized presidency and government, without the restraints of strong institutions, they may prove much less democratic. In fact, the lack of will to reform the judiciary and tackle corruption in it may be one of Wade's saddest legacies.

MEDIUM-TERM PRIORITY NUMBER TWO:
REINTEGRATE THE CASAMANCE

¶12. (C) Running for president seven years ago, Wade promised he would reintegrate the Casamance. The rebel Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance,s (MFDC's) October 2003 decision to seek peace created a real chance for Wade to

resolve two decade-old insurgency. Since then, he has taken partial steps toward peace, including: talks with MFDC political leaders; signing a late 2004 truce, and ostensibly broadening Casamance contacts in 2006 to local leaders who claimed (falsely) to have mystic authority in the rebels' ethnic culture. At the same time, though, Wade's government has spoken with many voices on the Casamance; his spokesmen seem driven less by peace than by political ambitions in Ziguinchor (presidential counselor Abdoulaye Balde), or by venality and illicit gain from cannabis, lumber cutting and export to Gambia, etc. By mid-2006, it was no longer clear that Wade favored a non-military solution. By year's end, though, it became clear that the military means he was willing and able to recommit to the region were inadequate to eradicate MFDC diehards who enjoy refuge in The Gambia. By early 2007, banditry, political killings and army-MFDC skirmishes pointed to expanding disorder.

¶13. (C) Wade's re-inauguration provides a chance to reconsider and reformulate his Casamance approach, but he must make major changes and there may be very little time left to do so with any real chance of success. Casamancais are calling on Wade to make the region his top national priority though doing so would require major commitments and heavy expenses. Actions he could undertake include:

- finding a way to engage the entire MFDC in meaningful negotiations, rather than just its civilian wing;
- managing diplomacy with The Gambia as well as with Guinea-Bissau to end sanctuary for the MFDC maquisards;
- pressing The Gambia harder to allow construction of a bridge over the Gambia River, or, alternatively, build a viable road or railway around The Gambia, rather than legacy projects in Dakar or even rural roads elsewhere, a top construction priority;
- directing state funds and attract private investment to the Casamance, including foreign worker remittances;
- concentrating on enhancing Casamance agriculture via systematic building of rural roads and small factories;
- naming presidential, Ministry of Interior, gendarme and military staff to the Casamance only after assuring both regional familiarity and commitment to achieving peace;
- monitoring that those who speak in the president's name or oversee official or military activities in the Casamance have no personal economic interest in the war; and,
- likewise, assure that whoever negotiates with the MFDC does so with the president's clear, exclusive and full authority, or, alternatively, take over those negotiations himself as a personal presidential mission.

A LONG-TERM PRIORITY: KEEP POLITICS SECULAR

¶14. (C) Academics may debate whether Islamic radicalism stems from urban poverty or is instead the domain of the young and educated middle class. In Senegal, rural pauperization, movement toward cities to find work, and accelerated crowding in inadequately infrastructured and job-poor bidonvilles all present recruiting opportunities for political-religious groups. We saw this between Wade's

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re-election and re-inauguration, when the radical but long-quiescent Tidjane Moustarchidines used a religious festival to charge Wade with trying to pit the Tidjanes against his own Mouride Brotherhood and insinuated that Wade engineered a 1990s political assassination and tried to kill Idrissa Seck during the presidential campaign. The opposition boycott of June 3 elections could enhance Moustarchidine influence: gifted youth leader Talla Sylla told us he will seek Moustarchidine support as a base to become the National Assembly's largest minority faction.

¶15. (C) Other Islamic power seekers are erasing the state's once hermetic seal between spiritual and political. Some have successfully received official recognition as political parties, and others are applying. Cheikh Bamba Dieye, a

recent International Visitor to the U.S., whose father was recognized for amalgamating Mouride and Salafist religious doctrines, ran for president last month. Another, Mbaye Niang, a fervent Mouride but known for his openness to Salafists in transit through Senegal as imam of the airport mosque, would have run if finances had permitted. Both are driven by religious doctrine or Islamic social principles. Similarly, the aging Salafists of Ibadou.Rahman use French-Koranic schools to establish the social base for a shari,a state within 20 years are, and we sense that local imams use the apparently proliferating small urban mosques as outlets for social criticism.

¶16. (C) There is another strain of religious leader shaped originally by doctrine, but motivated by ambition and greed: Mouride General Kara Mbacke and former Touba mayor Bethiou Thioune recruit among slum discontents, and each is rumored to believe, no matter how unrealistically, that he could be president. The father and son who run the Moustarchidines seem to be activated, do not seem to want secular power, but seem inspired rather by a complex mix of social and religious principle (the son) and the lure of both the Tidjane Khalifate and worldly lucre (the father).

¶17. (C) Wade and his successors must take steps to assure that Senegal prevents politics from sullyng religion or religion from radicalizing politics. Wade must understand that as a demonstrably devout Mouride, he must assuage Tidjane complaints of bias. He must curb the Moustarchidine, Kara Mbacke, Bethio Thioune and other religious militias, tendency toward violence. Then Wade (or successors) must recognize that while power-seeking radical Islam is not well-entrenched as of 2007, it will profit from urban social distress and that the best strategies to fight it are economic and developmental. The state will need a systematic agricultural policy designed to keep farmers on the land, and job measures for those in Dakar's "quartiers populaires" who continue to risk their lives and what little money their families can scrape together to board fishing boats bound for Spain,s Canary Islands. (NOTE: Wade,s Return to Agriculture program (REVA) is not a solution. END NOTE.) Other measures touch lightly on religion, such as encouraging foreign workers to remit salaries in ways that create jobs, rather than for mosque construction. The ruling party, in its search for potential partisan coalition allies, must remember that the state remains committed to secular democracy, that all applications to form religious parties must be carefully vetted and that in the past all such applications were denied.

¶18. (c) The state can do little beyond that as leaders of the brotherhoods age and are replaced, and as popular approaches to the Koran incorporate influences from Sunni Arab and perhaps even Shi,ite Islam. The state must do what it can, but mosque-state relations will be determined in future as much in spiritual centers as in the presidency.

COMMENT

¶19. (C) We have recommended above that Wade make reintegration of the Casamance a top priority of his five-year term, and that he and especially his successors forestall the growth of political-religious radicalism by creating jobs for those in the bidonvilles. We realize Senegal has limited resources to fully fund both, even if it considers them respectively medium- and long-term priorities. The proposed Millennium Challenge Account industrial platform at Diamniadio offers a possible solution)- a far better solution than Wade,s big infrastructure projects with no long-term job creation potential. Yet risks of inaction

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are potentially great. Even if Senegal's southern region is not lost to social chaos and isolation, opportunity costs are incurred each year in a Casamance that could be a national bread basket. Islamic radicalism is restrained by the

influence of the country's moderate Muslim leaders, but several militias accept violence as a political instrument and, on the margins, Salafists dream of a Shari'a state in 20 years. Tough developmental choices in the Casamance and the cities must begin to be made now.

¶20. (C) Political reforms are doable without major expense and would provide a firm institutional base and a foundation of public confidence for resolving the Casamance and religious radicalism problems. After a presidential election marked by ruling party attempts at manipulation, results of the June 3 elections must be above suspicion. Before the local elections in 2008, the allegedly flawed electoral lists must be proved correct or be corrected. Granting more authority to parliament, the judiciary, ministries and civil service runs against the grain of Wade's ruling style. He knows political give-and-take from long years in opposition, though, and is reliably reported to be concerned about his legacy as a major African democratic leader. If he does not become obsessed by naming a successor, he may still have the power, even as a lame duck, to assure a future balance between the powers of the presidency and other branches of government. END COMMENT.

¶21. (U) Visit Embassy Dakar's SIPRNet site at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/af/dakar>.
JACKSON